

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EUR-25 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01 IO-14 DRC-01 EB-11

OPR-02 /158 W

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P R 071505Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1118

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0397

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: P I N T L Y

SUBJECT: QADHAFI'S NEW ROLE

REF: TRIPOLI 393 (NOTAL)

1. WE CONTINUE TO SEE NO EVIDENCE THAT QADHAFI'S REAL POWER HAS BEEN DIMINISHED IN ANY IMPORTANT RESPECT BY RCC DECISION TO TURN OVER SOME OF HIS DUTIES TO JALLUD. NOR DO WE SEE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS OTHER THAN VOLUNTARY STEP BY QADHAFI. SINCE RCC DECISION, WHICH DATED APRIL 2 AND ONLY REVEALED IN NOTE TO DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS AFTER JALLUD'S DEPARTURE FOR PARIS APRIL 5, QADHAFI HAS CONTINUED TO ACT AS CHIEF OF STATE IN ALL BUT PROTOCOL WAY. DURING VISIT OF MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH JALLUD DID PROTOCOL HONORS AT AIRPORT, BUT IT WAS QADHAFI WHO WAS REPORTED TO HAVE HAD FOUR HOURS OF TALKS WITH VISITOR APRIL 3. MEMBER OF
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MAURITANIAN PARTY TOLD CHARGE THAT AT ONE POINT DURING

VISIT OULD DADDAH WAS CALLED AWAY FROM DINNER AT GUEST PALACE TO CONVERSE WITH QADHAFI, WHO HAD ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY.

2. BACKGROUND TO THIS DEVELOPMENT PROBABLY INCLUDES MORE THAN QADHAFI'S IMPATIENCE WITH PROTOCOL (REFTEL). THERE HAS BEEN GRUMBLING AMONG VARIOUS GROUPS, INCLUDING TECHNOCRATS IN CIVILIAN MINISTRIES AND ARMY OFFICERS OUTSIDE QADHAFI'S INNER CIRCLE, OVER QADHAFI'S HIGH-HANDED WAY WITH DECISIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN PERSISTANT RUMORS THAT QADHAFI WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH JALLUD'S PERFORMANCE DURING HIS RECENT EUROPEAN TOUR, AND OF FRICTION BETWEEN TWO MEN. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, QADHAFI MAY HAVE DECIDED TO ELEVATE HIMSELF ABOVE FRUSTRATIONS OF ADMINISTRATION. HE MAY HAVE FELT THAT TACTICALLY THIS WOULD BE GOOD TIME TO AVOID ASSOCIATING HIMSELF WITH ECONOMIC PROBLEMS LIKE INFLATION, MASSIVE SNARLS IN PORTS OF TRIPOLI AND BENGHAZI, ANNOYING SHORTAGES OF BASIC COMMODITIES AND PARTIAL FAILURE OF EXPENSIVE DESERT RECLAMATION PROJECT IN KUFRA. ROLE OF SUPREME ARBITRATOR WOULD SEEM TO SUIT HIM BETTER TEMPERAMENTALLY, AND IN PAST HE HAS SEEMED TO PREFER HIGH GROUND OF IDEOLOGY.

3. THIS MAY BECOME CLEARER OVER COMING DAYS, BUT FOR NOW OUR BEST GUESS IS QADHAFI WILL EMERGE, AS HE HAS IN PAST AFTER SIMILAR MANEUVERING, AS STRONG AS EVER. IN ANY EVENT, REPORTS OF HIS ECLIPSE BY JALLUD ARE PREMATURE. THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF TENSION IN TRIPOLI, OR OF INCREASED SECURITY.
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